



State of Connecticut  
Department of Developmental Services



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**DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES TESTIMONY  
BEFORE THE HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE**

**March 12, 2015**

Senator Moore, Representative Abercrombie, Senator Markley, Representative Wood and members of the Human Services Committee. I am Morna A. Murray, J.D., Commissioner of the Department of Developmental Services (DDS). Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on **H.B. No. 6860**  
**AN ACT CONCERNING A PILOT PROJECT TO IMPROVE TRANSITIONAL SERVICES  
FOR EMPLOYABLE YOUNG ADULTS WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER.**

This bill would create a pilot program to provide vocational training and information designed to improve employment opportunities to employable individuals with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) between the ages of twenty-five and thirty-one years of age. Employment supports and opportunities for young adults with autism spectrum disorder are important issues. Although we are going through a difficult budget year, we look forward to working with all interested parties this session to see what is possible in the context of other budget decisions. The Legislative Program Review and Investigations Committee just completed a study on Transitional Services for Youth and Young Adults with ASD. The Committee dedicated time to studying this important topic and DDS participated in the study process. Information on the recent study can be found at [http://www.cga.ct.gov/pri/2014\\_ASD.asp](http://www.cga.ct.gov/pri/2014_ASD.asp).

There are 553 individuals ages 25 through 31 with intellectual disability and ASD indicated on their most recent Level of Need (LON) assessment. The majority of these individuals receive waiver services and have access to employment services. DDS's Autism Spectrum Disorder Services Division currently provides waiver services, including employment supports, for 38 individuals ages 25 through 31. However, of the approximately 550 individuals on the ASD Services Division Waiting List, 57 are ages 25 through 31 and could benefit from employment supports and services.

Connecticut has made significant progress in providing supports and services to individuals with ASD over the past decade, but we recognize that there is still more work to be done. DDS will continue to explore creative options within available resources to meet the needs of as many individuals as possible.

Thank you again for the opportunity to submit testimony on this important issue. You may contact Christine Pollio Cooney, DDS Director of Legislative and Executive Affairs at (860) 418-6066 if you have any questions.